

Veterans Affairs FY 2013 Sponsored Conferences in excess of \$100,000

Preliminary Data (Pending Update)

Title	Total Costs	Location	Start Date	End Date	#VA Paid Travelers	Conference Description
National Veterans Rehabilitative Creative Arts Festival	\$ 362,866	Boston, MA	10/8/2012	10/14/2012	67	Recognizes Veterans for their creative accomplishments. 3725 Veterans from 130 VA facilities.
Challenge Session 2013-4	\$ 3,581,004	Baltimore, MD	10/9/2012	12/20/2012	255	Challenge training is a critical element of providing employees the skill sets necessary to achieve the standards of delivering compensation benefits to Veterans.
Compensation/Backlog (Challenge) Training for New Claims Processors	\$ 2,374,216	Baltimore, MD	10/14/2012	12/20/2012	257	Challenge training is a critical element of providing employees the skill sets necessary to achieve the standards of delivering compensation benefits to Veterans.
Senior Executive Strategic Leadership/management training - Course II	\$ 156,421	Charlotte, NC	10/14/2012	10/19/2012	23	The purpose of SLC II – Management is to further develop a senior executive's critical thinking, strategic decision-making, and enterprise and business skills, thereby enabling them to better lead VA Transformation.
Basic Police Officer Course (BPOC)	\$ 654,328	Little Rock, AR	10/29/2012	12/21/2013	61	The Office of Emergency Management, in partnership with the Office of Security and Law Enforcement, has been providing an Emergency Management training session in each Basic Patrol Officer Course (BPOC) that is conducted at VA's Law Enforcement Training Center in Little Rock, Arkansas.
Advanced Patrol Officer Course Refresher Training	\$ 102,511	Long Beach, CA	11/5/2012	11/9/2012	50	Certification for Title 38 U.S.C. Sec 902.
Challenge Travel Training 2013-2	\$ 2,094,863	Baltimore, MD	1/1/2013	3/29/2013	373	To train staff from Regional Offices nationwide.
Basic Police Officer Course(BPOC)	\$ 696,018	Little Rock, AR	1/7/2013	3/1/2013	61	FY 13 Training of newly appointed VA Police Officers for protection VA wide.
National Training Academy	\$ 375,189	Falling Waters, WV	1/15/2013	1/17/2013	379	The National Public Affairs & Outreach Training Academy took a significant step toward creating a formal credentialing program for the Department's public affairs officers (PAOs), and was only the third national training event for outreach specialists. The Academy was structured by experience levels, with all participants took part in web-based training before the Academy. Less experienced PAOs attended a special one-day training event to ensure that they had the basic knowledge and skills to perform their jobs effectively. More experienced PAOs chose from a variety of classes -social media, internal publications, crisis communications, legal issues, television interviews, etc. -to hone their skills and broaden their experience. The National Public Affairs & Outreach Training Academy provided PAOs and outreach specialists with skills to work with Veterans, survivors, Veterans service organizations, the news media and other stakeholders effectively. The training encouraged interaction between facility-level VA employees within the same region, offered practical guidance on dealing with change and succession management, fostered a culture of forward-looking planning, and integrated social media into overall public affairs and outreach programs. The outreach portion of the academy provided a forum for improving VA's outreach strategy and guidance, for exchanging ideas and partnership opportunities regarding this new career field, and for synchronizing internal communications for outreach throughout VA.
Major Construction Project Manager Training	\$ 146,013	Chapel Hill, NC	2/11/2013	2/15/2013	26	Provide project managers with the knowledge and skills required as they undergo a transformational change. The Significant change in the roles and responsibilities of the major construction project managers is necessary to increase on time and on budget delivery, as well as improve overall project delivery of construction projects.

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Major Construction Project Management Training	\$ 139,612	Bay Pines, FL	2/11/2013	2/15/2013	26	Provide project managers with the knowledge and skills required as they undergo a transformational change. The Significant change in the roles and responsibilities of the major construction project managers is necessary to increase on time and on budget delivery, as well as improve overall project delivery of construction projects.
ISO 9001 Phase II Rollout	\$ 191,127	Washington, DC	3/11/2013	3/28/2013	200	Increase in the consistency of processes used in delivering healthcare in VHA; Increase in employee empowerment through employees' understanding of the processes that affect healthcare of the Veteran; Increase in the ability to assess the effectiveness of VHA system-wide processes in achieving desired results; Improvement in employees' understanding of their roles and responsibilities within those process.
Challenge Training 2013-3	\$ 1,940,555	Baltimore, MD	3/19/2013	5/17/2013	255	Challenge training is a critical element of providing employees the skill sets necessary to achieve the standards of delivering compensation benefits to Veterans.
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	\$ 311,167	Snomass, CO	3/31/2013	4/5/2013	103	Approximately 400 Veterans participate in a therapeutic adaptive sports rehabilitation clinic.
Station Enrichment Training (SET)	\$ 194,644	Baltimore, MD	4/3/2013	5/18/2013	45	The SET program is a national technical training curriculum that provides Veterans Service Center employees at challenged stations the skills they need to function effectively in their positions as VSRs or RVSRs.
Graduate Health Administration Training Program	\$ 136,574	Baltimore, MD	4/21/2013	4/26/2013	70	The Graduate Health Administration Training Program (GHATP) prepares VHA healthcare administrators and administrative support professionals through a year-long set of on-the-job developmental experiences. It directly supports the VHA Succession and Workforce Management Strategic Plan and is managed through an executive-level board with oversight through the Succession and Workforce Development Management Subcommittee (SWDMS) of the National Leadership Council's Workforce Committee. This Graduate Health Administration Training Program face-to-face session is a week-long orientation for Graduate Health Administration Training Program participants to the VA organizational structure, functions, current issues and national relationships between the Departments and other community and federal agencies, including Congress.
Basic Police Officer Course (BPOC)	\$ 668,484	Little Rock, AR	4/25/2013	4/25/2013	61	The Office of Emergency Management, in partnership with the Office of Security and Law Enforcement, has been providing an Emergency Management training session in each Basic Patrol Officer Course (BPOC) that is conducted at VA's Law Enforcement Training Center in Little Rock, Arkansas.
Basic Police Officer Course(BPOC)	\$ 672,292	Little Rock, AR	4/29/2013	6/21/2013	63	Critical in preparing newly hired police officers to serve at our medical centers nationwide.
National VHA Environmental Programs Service (EPS) Training Conference	\$ 455,490	Little Rock, AR	5/13/2013	5/15/2013	220	Advanced Environmental Program training to aid in compliance and oversight.
Basic Police Officer Course (BPOC)	\$ 699,700	Little Rock, AR	5/27/2013	7/19/2013	73	Prepares VA Police Officers to serve at our medical centers nationwide.

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National Veterans Golden Age Games (NVGAG)	\$ 490,130	Buffalo, NY	5/30/2013	6/4/2013	124	The NVGAG provides a multi-event sports and therapeutic recreation program for Veterans 55 years of age and older. Wellness, health promotion and disease prevention are the primary objectives.
LA Station Enrichment Training	\$ 387,098	Oakland, CA	6/3/2013	6/28/2013	222	All claims processors and managers received refresher training (based on Challenge curricula) to develop/rate/promulgate Veterans' claims at established standards of timeliness and accuracy. Contributes to overall achievement of national production and accuracy goals driving toward Secretary's goals of no cases over 125 days and decision accuracy of 98% in 2015. New or promoted employees learned benefit claims-processing skills.
Health Care Leadership Development Program -- Week 4a	\$ 217,132	Washington, DC	6/10/2013	6/14/2013	75	Training designed to equip employees with the skills needed to successfully lead in healthcare.

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Senior Executive Strategic Leadership Course II - Basic	\$ 157,994	Chapel Hill, NC	6/16/2013	6/21/2013	26	The purpose of SLC II – Basic is to further develop a senior executive's critical thinking, strategic decision-making, and enterprise and business skills, thereby enabling them to better lead VA Transformation. Senior executives attend SLC II before the end of their first year in VA and after SLC I.
Train the Trainer (T3) HR LOB Team	\$ 148,200	Washington, DC	6/17/2013	6/21/2013	130	Human Resources Line of Business conducting training on implementation of new HRIS solution replacing PAID system.
Behavioral Threat Management Program (BTMP) Disruptive Committee Chairs East/West Seminar	\$ 127,854	San Antonio, TX	6/24/2013	6/28/2013	65	Recertification training for trainers for therapeutic containment & safety.
National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG)	\$ 660,245	Richmond, VA	6/25/2013	6/30/2013	147	The NVWC provides a multi-event sports and therapeutic recreation program for Veterans requiring wheelchairs for mobility. Emphasis is on rehabilitation goals as well as health promotion and disease prevention.
Overseas Military Coordinators Program (3rd tour)	\$ 172,848	United Kingdom, Bahrain, Spain, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Japan, Korea, Netherlands	7/1/2013	9/30/2013	11	To provide VA benefits briefings and one-on-one VA benefits counseling sessions to Veterans, Service members and dependents who are currently stationed or residing overseas.
Association of Government Accountants Professional Development Conference (AGA PDC)	\$ 106,784	Grapevine, TX	7/14/2013	7/17/2013	43	50 VA employees attended the AGA PDC event to improve their financial skills and competencies. Many of the courses offered addressed topics of importance to VA including VA's #1 financial management priority, reducing improper payments. The AGA PDC is the authoritative source for the knowledge and contacts employees need to succeed in today's constantly
Peer Support Specialist Certification Training (VHA)	\$ 206,102	Chicago, IL	7/21/2013	7/26/2013	37	Public Laws 110-387 and 111-163 require VHA to provide peer specialist certification training to peer support specialists and technicians who are employed by VA, but not certified. In July of 2012, mental health enhancement initiative funding began being released to the field to hire additional peer support staff. In August of 2012, the President issued an Executive Order calling for the hiring of 800 new peer specialists by the end of December of 2013. As a result, significant numbers of existing and newly hired peer support technicians and apprentices will need to attend peer specialist certification training in FY 2013. The main objective of peer support certification training is for VHA peer specialists and peer support technicians to receive certification through online and face-to-face learning opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in peer support competency areas.
Basic Police Officer Course (BPOC)	\$ 707,828	Little Rock, AR	7/29/2013	9/20/2013	76	Prepares VA Police Officers to serve at our medical centers nationwide.
National Veterans Small Business Conference	\$ 1,525,668	St. Louis, MO	8/4/2013	8/10/2013	395	To advance VA's mission of supporting America's Veterans by providing access to resources which offer Veteran-Owned Small Businesses opportunities to expand capacity, build partnerships, and increase networking opportunities with Program Decision Makers which may assist in achievement of VA Small Business Goals.
Time and Attendance System (VATAS) "Train-the-Trainer Training 1	\$ 113,783	Austin, TX	8/4/2013	8/10/2013	75	Trained payroll staff (payroll supervisors, payroll technicians, payroll leads) from Tomah VA Medical Center, NCA (MSNs 1,2 &3), OI&T, and VBA (areas 1 &3) on the new VA Time and Attendance System. The trained payroll staff subsequently provided training at their facilities in advance of deployment to the field scheduled for September 8, 2013.
VSCM and Quality Review Training	\$ 200,676	Marietta, GA	8/5/2013	8/9/2013	153	To identify, discuss, and improve quality service for our customers. Provides communication opportunities and information sharing of new and revised claims processing techniques and procedures with stakeholders who attend the training.

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VR&E Leadership/Workload Management Training	\$ 140,078	Denver, CO	8/5/2013	8/9/2013	80	Officers designed to enhance the skill sets and day-to-day management of a VR&E division.
VISN 11 Standard Work Collaborative	\$ 103,200	Danville, IL	8/12/2013	8/27/2013	48	The purpose of this program is to foster synergy of effort on thoughtful problem solving at the front-line. This offering will serve to satisfy and be in alignment with VHA organizational/facility priorities and measurable performance goals for this to occur. Unit staff and leaders (i.e., unit supervisors, Service Chiefs, coaches and their Quad/Pentad sponsors) participating will be expected to model these evolving CDI work practices in their work locations. As a result, they should be better able to support the spread of this method of staff engagement to other work areas in their facility. There are no travel costs or speaker fees for FY13 these have been paid for by VISN 11. All programs will be held at VHA facilities.
Time and Attendance System (VATAS) "Train-the-Trainer Training 2	\$ 133,577	Austin, TX	8/18/2013	8/24/2013	75	Trained payroll staff (payroll supervisors, payroll technicians, payroll leads) from VBA (areas 2 & 4), NCA (MSN's 4 & 5), and VISN 12 on the new VA Time and Attendance System. The trained payroll staff subsequently provided training at their facilities in advance of deployment to the field scheduled for September 22, 2013.
Clinical Executive Training – West	\$ 289,850	Long Beach, CA	8/19/2013	8/20/2013	200	Provide a dynamic environment to address and optimize critical patient transitions including PACT and Specialty Care, Input to Output, and VA to Non VA.
Women's Health Primary Care Provider (PCP) Large-Scale Mini-Residency	\$ 287,290	Tampa, FL	8/19/2013	8/23/2013	158	The population of women veterans utilizing Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services is expected to continue to increase. VHA recognizes that providers are in need of a program to update their competencies in women's health care. In order to ensure that comprehensive primary care will be provided to women accessing VA services at all sites of care, it is estimated that a minimum of 2,000 providers be trained to ensure a minimum of 2 proficient providers per site. To date about 1,200 providers have been trained in part 1 of the core curriculum and about 600 have been trained in part 2, but only 50% of CBOCs (Community Based Outpatient Clinic) (as of FY2011) have one or more trained providers on site. Furthermore, in many CBOCs and medical centers, women patients are dispersed over a large number of providers. For these reasons, ongoing training in core women's health topics is an ongoing need. Traditional mini-residency course evaluation: Level one evaluation reveals that 98-100% of participants would recommend the training to others. Level 2 evaluation of the national program reveals improved provider comfort in all topic areas queried. Participants complete an action plan to address an issue in their practice and 6-month follow up reveals the implementation of several initiatives to improve clinical practice, such as medication and pelvic exam tables in CBOCs, availability of pregnancy and STI (sexually transmitted infection) kits, etc. Data from one VISN reveals decreased specialty consults (such as gynecology) by PCPs (primary care provider) as a result of the training (Level 4 evaluation). Note that the FY12 offering of this program filled registration 3 weeks before registration closed, supporting the need for continued training.

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Peer Support—Expansion, Implementation and Practice	\$ 260,617	Minneapolis, MN	8/21/2013	8/23/2013	168	This conference is designed to assist Mental Health selecting officials and supervisors in complying with two relatively new Public Laws (PL 110-387 and PL 111-163) mandating the creation and implementation of a new job classification—Peer Support Specialist. These laws require Peer Support Specialist to be Veterans who have a lived experience with mental health conditions and treatments. The job classification and requirements are new to VHA and provide special challenges for selecting officials and supervisors. Content will include hiring, implementation, practice, and supervisory issues and will address major areas of concern for supervisors and peer specialists including managing dual role relationships, role confusion, human resource support for hiring individuals with mental health conditions under an entirely new VA HR classification. Boundary issues between peer specialists and other Veteran participants will also be addressed. In addition to the new Public Laws, this training follows on the heels of the publication of a new Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Peer Support Services Handbook (1163.05, released in June 2011) as well as a Peer Support Student Edition Training Manual.
Developing Dental Leaders in Changing and Challenging Times	\$ 187,259	Tampa, FL	8/21/2013	8/23/2013	179	The rapidly changing VA dental environment has created a gap in leadership capabilities among existing facility and VISN level dental managers. Skilled clinicians have been thrust into leadership positions without the benefit of formalized leadership or management training. The purpose of this conference is to close that gap by engaging participants in interactive sessions that solve real-life issues affecting dental services. Topics such as infection control crisis, poor quality scores, demand-capacity challenges and ineffective business plans will all be explored. At the end of this conference, facility and VISN dental leaders will be more knowledgeable about the available clinical management tools to improve the delivery of quality dental services to Veterans. Business process improvements that have a direct impact on the daily operations and cost effectiveness of dental services will be demonstrated and shared. Established management benchmarks will be reviewed at least on a biannual basis to ascertain the success of this program. This learning intervention is strategically linked to: access (outreach, patient centered care, quality and safety), performance and outcomes (data analytics), and health care efficiency ADA accreditation hours will be requested for this conference.
Time and Attendance System (VATAS) "Train-the-Trainer Training 3	\$ 122,247	Austin, TX	8/25/2013	8/31/2013	68	Trained payroll staff (payroll supervisors, payroll technicians, payroll leads) from VHA VISN's 1,2,3,5,19 on the new VA Time and Attendance System. The trained payroll staff subsequently provided training at their facilities in advance of deployment to the field scheduled for October 6, 2013.
Women's Health Primary Care Providers Large-Scale Mini-Residency	\$ 329,923	Orlando, FL	8/27/2013	8/29/2013	214	Women's Health Mini-Residency: VA Primary Care Providers have traditionally seen male patients and given the ever-increasing numbers of women Veterans, must be 're-trained' to provide comprehensive primary care for women. Orthopedic Mini-Residency (or alternate specialty depending on need): It is postulated that training primary care providers to enhance their skills in diagnosing and managing common orthopedic issues will decrease unnecessary referrals and have a positive on impact fee basis costs as well as access to internal VA Orthopedics consults.

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Mental Health Intensive Case Management	\$ 185,123	San Antonio, TX	8/27/2013	8/29/2013	99	This training is designed to address the increased variability among Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM) teams/facilities VHA system wide. A hiatus in MHICM training in the last two years has resulted in leading to "mission drift" that runs counter to the Secretary's priority of reducing service variation. MHICM teams also need training on implementing the new MHICM model policy, the interface and evolving collaboration with other specialty mental health services for Veterans with SMI, increasing coordination of care with other VA and community, utilizing performance and outcome metrics, and using evidence-based treatment. While past practice has provided training focused only on new staff, current request focuses more broadly to provide hands-on guidance to all team members in the aforementioned areas as well as strengthening ties to support technical assistance year round. Two separate trainings are proposed to allow the possibility of half of the staff from the current 111 MHICM teams to attend each without leaving a facility unstaffed.
Clinical Executive Training – East	\$ 261,200	Bay Pines, FL	8/29/2013	8/30/2013	93	Provide a dynamic environment to address and optimize critical patient transitions including PACT and Specialty Care, Input to Output, and VA to Non VA.
Challenge Training Session 2013-1	\$ 2,430,388	Baltimore, MD	9/8/2013	9/13/2013	260	Challenge training is a critical element of providing employees the skill sets necessary to achieve the standards of delivering compensation benefits to Veterans.
New Executive Training (Next) VHACO Orientations	\$ 180,572	Washington, DC	9/9/2013	9/13/2013	65	Orientation training for New Executives.
National Disabled Veterans TEE Tournament (NDVTEE)	\$ 135,326	Iowa City, IA	9/9/2013	9/13/2013	315	The NDVTEE provides therapeutic adaptive golf, bowling, kayaking, horseback riding opportunities to enhance the rehabilitation process for Veterans with severe physical and cognitive disabilities.
VISN 9 Leadership Institute	\$ 119,058	Jackson, MS	9/9/2013	9/13/2013	47	Upon completion of this program participants are expected to: 1. Identify different leadership styles, including the strengths and weaknesses of each. 2. Identify and discuss their personal leadership styles. 3. Utilize development and communication of goals as well as vision and mission statements to improve productivity of their work centers. 4. Identify and utilize the basic steps of project management as it applies to a healthcare organization. 5. Implement a Personal Development Plan, which includes specific improvement goals. 6. Implement a Workplace Initiative Plan that results in organizational improvement in one or more of the following areas: customer service, work climate, work habits, work output, quality, cost, time. 7. Identify and enhance effective uses of power and influence. 8. Understand the process of business plan design in a healthcare organization. 9. Shadow 5 facility or VISN 9 leaders during the course of Leadership Institute. 10. Identify and understand individual personality and generational differences and learn to lead each type effectively; both in an individual and team setting. 11. Develop and present professional presentations through the use of effective communication skills. 12. Recognize and manage stress in the work center. 13. Manage and lead change. 14. Lead productive meetings.

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Peer Support Supervision - Expansion, Implementation and Practice	\$ 399,817	Denver, CO	9/10/2013	9/12/2013	185	Executive order on improving mental health services.
Patient Safety Improvement 101/ Root Cause Analysis (RCA) and Healthcare Failure and Effect Analysis (HFMEA)	\$ 161,260	Orlando, FL	9/10/2013	9/12/2013	74	Improve clinical practice by helping participants perform systematic root cause analysis to find the real, fixable root causes of problems. It will include hands on application of concepts. It will also include knowledge-based elements to carry out analysis using Healthcare Failure and Effect Analysis (HFMEA) techniques in accordance with the revised standards issued by the Joint Commission. Participants will learn through instruction and practice the steps involved in carrying out a successful proactive risk assessment using Healthcare FMEA. In addition, we will discuss how to choose an appropriate topic for evaluation.
Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae/Multi-Drug Resistant	\$ 322,834	San Antonio, TX	9/11/2013	9/12/2013	200	Participants learn core associated prevention practices for associated infections.
Time and Attendance System (VATAS) "Train-the-Trainer Training 4	\$ 124,700	Austin, TX	9/15/2013	9/21/2013	69	from VHA VISN's 20,21,22,23 & 4 on the new VA Time and Attendance System. The trained payroll staff subsequently provided training at their
National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic	\$ 394,373	San Diego, CA	9/16/2013	9/21/2013	232	The NVSCC provides Veterans with severe disabilities by utilizing summer sports and other activities to enhance the total rehabilitation process to prevent depression, suicide, and aid in the psychosocial readjustment and physical well-being.
Quarterly Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Quality Management Officer (QMO) Meeting	\$ 145,277	Washington, DC	9/17/2013	9/18/2013	94	Have an enhanced understanding of cross-cutting, ongoing, national clinical issues and prepare for implementation of potential strategies and solutions within specific VISNs or system-wide.

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Advancing Technologies & Treatments Training Conference	\$ 186,469	Atlanta, GA	9/20/2013	9/21/2013	102	New technology training for enhancement of treatments.
Former Prisoners of War (FPOW) Case Management Training	\$ 230,113	Dallas, TX	9/23/2013	9/27/2013	108	Required training for case managers in evaluating and overseeing treatment in the former POW.
Prevention and Management of Disruptive Behaviors (PMDB) Trainer Recalibration Conference	\$ 154,217	Albuquerque, NM	9/23/2013	9/26/2013	85	Prevention Training techniques for disruptive behaviors specifically, physical and verbal.
Former Prisoners of War (FPOW)	\$ 220,436	Salt Lake City, UT	9/24/2013	9/26/2013	108	In concurrence with the new VHA Directive 2011-018, which states each medical facility is required to have a trained and certified team to evaluate and oversee treatment, provided to our Former Prisoners of War (FPOW) community. This team at a minimum requires two physicians (one general practitioner and one Compensation & Pension physician) and a social worker to complete the care and benefit team. At the present time, very few, if any hospitals are in compliance with the new directive that was effective March 2011 and delivered to all facilities. It is imperative to continue to train our staff to be better able to treat, evaluate and give the benefits our FPOW have earned. This workshop will address needed improvements in knowledge and skill gaps, especially in identifying the medical, psychosocial and mental health conditions that commonly affect FPOW. The curriculum will also address laws that govern VA benefits that are special for this group. This face-to-face intervention is to prepare Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefit Administration Provider Teams to compassionately, effectively and efficiently rate, process and provide FPOW with needed treatment and compensation. The participants who are eligible to complete this workshop will meet one of the three requirements for designation as a member of FPOW care and benefits team.
Senior Leadership Retreat for 10P, 10A, and 10N	\$ 141,117	Washington, DC	9/30/2013	9/30/2013	215	Assess progress over the past year and explored shared vision of future VHA healthcare; discussed current transformational initiatives and 10P efforts to that visions; assessed gaps in operational plans; and identified potential next steps.
Total	\$ 28,621,738					